

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 03762 131943Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-02 OES-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 HUD-01  
HEW-04 EB-08 FAA-00 DOTE-00 COME-00 FRB-03 XMB-02  
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 STR-05 CEA-01 /108 W  
-----030453 132354Z /72

R 131900Z DEC 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1708  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT TD  
SUBJ: PNM ANNUAL CONVENTION

REF: PORT OF SPAIN 3704

1. THE 19TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE RULING PNM TOOK PLACE  
DECEMBER 9-11 AT THE CHAGSURAMAS CONVENTION CENTER, WITH  
PM WILLIAMS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING AND CLOSING SESSIONS.  
AS IS CUSTOMARY, THE CONFERENCE WAS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AND  
NO OFFICIAL REPORT HAS YET BEEN ISSUED. HOWEVER, PRESS  
REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE PM GAVE HIS FULLEST JUSTIFICATION  
THUS FAR FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRINIDAD'S IRON AND STEEL  
INDUSTRY, WHILE CRITIZING US. ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE PROJECT.  
HE ALSO IS REPORTED TO HAVE LAMENTED FAILURE IN PROMOTING  
CARICOM INTEGRATION (SEPTTEL).

2. THE CONVENTION ALSO CONCENTRATED ON SUCH PARTY  
MATTERS AS FINANCES. IN ADDITION, PNM SECRETARY  
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GENERAL NICHOLAS SIMONETTE AND TREASURER BRENSLEY  
BARROW WERE SACKED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE. BOTH WERE KNOWN  
TO HAVE BEEN IN WILLIAMS' DOGHOUSE FOR SOME TIME AND  
THEIR SUMMARY REMOVAL WAS EXPECTED. IN FACT, A MORE  
EXTENSIVE PURGE OF THE PARTY HEIRARCHY HAD BEEN WIDELY  
RUMORED THAN WHAT ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE. NO REPLACE-  
MENTS HAVE YET BEEN NAMED FOR SIMONETTE AND BARROW.

3. WILLIAMS WAS QUOTED AS SAYING IN HIS DECEMBER 9 SPEECH THAT, WITH THE BUDGET BEHIND HIM, WE WOULD BEGIN HIS ANNUAL "HIBERNATION" AND WOULD "GO NOWHERE, ACCEPT NO INVITATIONS, ISSUE NONE", RESTRICTING HIMSELF TO ESSENTIAL OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND HIS OWN WORK, REPORTEDLY A BOOK HE IS WRITING.

4. IN HIS CLOSING SESSION SPEECH DECEMBER 11, WILLIAMS REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED THE COMPOSITION (DONALDSON, CHAMBERS, MAHABIR, PADMORE, DE SOURZA AND FRANCIS) AND DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE NEW INTER-MINISTERIAL ENTERPRISES COMMITTEE (REFTEL, PARA 11), WHICH HE HIMSELF WILL CHAIR. HE COVERED A NUMBER OF PROBLEM AREAS DEALT WITH IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH, SUCH AS HOUSING, THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM, AND AIRPORT SECURITY. IN ADDITION, THE PM STRUCK BACK AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND PRESS FOR THEIR CRITICISMS OF THE HOUSING PROGRAM, DECLARING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PRESS AHEAD ON ITS CHOSEN COURSE AS ANNOUNCED.

5. COMMENT: INFORMATION ON THE PNM CONVENTION HAS BEEN SURFACING DAILY IN THE PRESS IN DRIBS AND DRABS, BUT AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, NOTHING REALLY NEW CAME OUT OF IT, ASIDE FROM THE EXPECTED PERSONNEL SHIFTS. THE CONVENTION ITSELF APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ANTICLIMATIC AFTER THE UNUSUALLY BUSY AUTUMN ON SEVERAL FRONTS WHICH WILLIAMS AND THE OTHER TOP LEADERS SPENT. THERE HAD BEEN SOME SPECULATION LOCALLY THAT WILLIAMS MIGHT OPT FOR A SNAP ELECTION EARLY NEXT YEAR ON THE STRENGTH OF WHAT THE PRESS HAS CALLED AN "ELECTION BUDGET," USING THIS TO CLEAR OUT SOME PNM PARLIAMENTARY "MILLSTONES," AS WELL AS MUCH OF THE SHAH FACTION OF THE DIVIDED ULF. REFERRING TO THESE RUMORS DECEMBER 11, THE PM DID NOTHING TO DAMPEN THE SPECULATION WHEN HE REPORTEDLY SAID "WHO KNOWS" THEY (THE PRESS) JUST MAY BE BLOODY WELL RIGHT."--BUT THIS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS CONFIRMATION OF THE RUMOR EITHER.

FOX

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PINT, TD, PNM  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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